

July 2015

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News from the Coastal North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Complex

Alligator River, Pea Island, Pocosin Lakes,
Roanoke River, Mackay Island, and Currituck

Intern Training is Vital to their Success!

Our interns participate in a variety of jobs while at the refuges. Before heading out to the field, water, or visitor center, they must train in the proper use of the tools they will be using. This may be a post-hole digger or mower, but it could also be a canoe or cash register. Interns also must learn about the various programs conducted during the summer helping to make them ambassadors for the refuges. Our interns come from all over the country and reside in one of our intern bunkhouses.

If you see them while visiting the refuge, be sure to say hello. They bring with them much enthusiasm and enjoy interacting with wildlife and people!



Interns and other volunteers learning the procedures for duties as a sea turtle monitor from Biologist Kris Fair; credit: USFWS.



Canoe tour training at Alligator River Refuge, credit: USFWS.



Certification in use of ATVs and UTVs with Biologist and ATV Trainer Brian VanDruuten, credit: USFWS.

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New Parking Lots for the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center

Anyone visiting the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center recently may have noticed a lot of heavy equipment and chaos while trying to navigate the parking lot. Some have even wondered if the building is closed due to all the orange cones and materials throughout the lots.

By the end of July, things will be much tidier when you enter the driveway and parking lots.

No longer will you have to jump over puddles or head to the carwash after your visit due to all the dust on your vehicle.

Many visitors have wondered why the lots weren't paved from the beginning. According to Curtis Cannon, T/A Facilities Operations and Maintenance Manager, "The original plan for the parking lot to be paved was changed due to funding. The original contractor left us with subsoil drainage and a lot of dust. This caused many issues for not only vehicles using the area but also for the ventilation system for the building."

Eventually when funding was found, a plan was drawn up modifying the original plan. Curtis designed the new plan which includes pavers between the native plants allowing visitors to get closer to them. This will help visitors realize they not only are allowed to walk through the garden, but they are also encouraged to do so. Curtis added, "Additional bicycle racks have been installed to enable us to reach the silver status on LEED certification. Visitors will also find picnic

Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society

The Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society exists to support interpretive, educational, and volunteer programs for several National Wildlife Refuges, with a focus on Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges. Your contribution helps make it possible for us to provide this assistance.

The CWRS offers specific support for local K-12 schools by sending volunteers and staff to make educational presentations. The CWRS also provides transportation grants for students and teachers to visit the refuges for educational programs. Membership



Curbing has been added prior to paving the driveway and parking lots, credit:USFWS.



A new fence will help delineate employee parking from visitor parking, which will direct visitors to spaces closer to the visitor entrance, credit: USFWS.

tables and trash receptacles at the front of the building. For safety and additional direction for drivers, new signs and

painted lines will be placed in the parking lots." We thank you for your patience during this time.

fees and donations help maintain refuge ground and water trails, pay for refuge visitor services staff, assist with the annual *Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival*, and support dozens of other refuge programs and projects.

Please support your National Wildlife Refuges by donating, \$5, \$10, \$50, \$100 or more. As a small thank you for your donation, you will receive a card to print and carry with you which offers 10% off purchases in Pea Island and National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center gift shops.

Please send your check or money order to:
Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society (CWRS)
P.O. Box 1808, Manteo, NC 27954

Or, call 252/216 9464 with your VISA, MasterCard, Discover and American Express donation. Or, go online to the CWRS website and make a direct credit card donation: <http://www.coastalwildliferefuge.com/support.html>

The amount of your contribution to Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society may be tax deductible as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes. CWRS is a 501 (c) 3, non-profit organization.

Our Resident Volunteers

Lauren and George Radecky have volunteering in their blood. For 30 years, they taught what it was like to live during the American Revolution in all original 13 colonies. And for 15 years, they volunteered at Artsquest, an arts and music organization in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

They became volunteers for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service while visiting Anahuac NWR in Anahuac, Texas only to find the Refuge needed additional help. They stayed for three months and have gone back for the last three years. They are full time RV volunteers and travel with three cats and a fish tank full of Guppies. The couple has also volunteered at the National Elk Refuge in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

This is their third time volunteering with Pea Island and Alligator River NWR and they thoroughly enjoy their time here.

George and Peggy Harrison both retired with 30 plus years of service from the state of North Carolina. They both worked at a residential facility for the mentally handicapped where George was the maintenance supervisor and Peggy worked in the psychology department. After retiring, they volunteered with the National Park Service for three years at Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. They have volunteered at Pea Island and Alligator River Refuges since 2011. (And the staff is thankful for that!) They both enjoy the outdoors and feel they have found the perfect "home" with Alligator River and Pea Island Refuges.



John Jennings is back as a Resident Volunteer at Alligator River Refuge after spending a short time at Pocosin Lakes Refuge. He will be here until October. (And the staff enjoys his help!) For those of you who haven't had a chance to meet John, he has three children, five



(And the staff appreciates all their hard work!) They consider it a privilege to volunteer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife,

and while they have accumulated 3,300 plus hours, they look forward to volunteering for many more years.



grandchildren, and one dog (Yoda). His home base is North Miami Beach, but he enjoys traveling to other states and volunteers wherever he goes.

John has visited three state parks in Virginia, one in Florida, and three wildlife refuges. When he isn't volunteering,

he enjoys hiking, fishing, kayaking, snorkeling, geocaching, and going out on his boat when he is in Florida. In the near future, John plans to spend more time learning the birds of North America and traveling to see new sites.



Our New Osprey Tower
A fine osprey platform is now erected at the back of South Pond at Pea Island NWR through the combined efforts of many folks.

First, veteran volunteer and birding enthusiast Neal Moore built the platform and donated it to the refuge. Next, the talented Equipment Operator Eric Meekins designed and welded a pipe

sleeve and attachments to keep the osprey platform secure and stable on its pole. Refuge Biologist Kris Fair directed where the platform needed to go, and Equipment Operators Bobby Govan, Eric Craddock, and Eric Meekins raised and secured the platform to the pole.

Equipment repair issues greatly delayed the project, but it was finally placed on April 16. Two days later, ospreys had moved in and were building a nest! We don't know if they fledged any chicks, but it is gratifying that Neal's hard work and generosity, as well as the staff's great work paid off. Thanks to all!



Top: erecting the osprey platform, credit: USFWS. Above, the osprey platform, credit: USFWS.

Now It's Easier to Support Your National Wildlife Refuges

All refuge gift shop purchases (Pea Island, Pocosin Lakes, and Alligator River National Wildlife Refuges), on-line and over-the-phone donations, and registrations for summer programs and Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival can now be made using all four major credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover.



Gift Shop Update

The Gift Shops at Pea Island and the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center are fully stocked and include several new items. We carry T-shirts, wonderful gift books for children and adults, small yard art, original note cards, and affordable jewelry. Due to updating our inventory, we always have items on our sale table!

By shopping with us you support your Refuges and have a unique gift for any occasion. Come see what's new!

Fire Facility Update



Completion of the office and support building is well underway, credit:USFWS.



The storage building site is beginning to show signs of progress, credit:USFWS.

If you've been on Milltail Road near the Operations and Maintenance Facility lately, you probably noticed a lot going on. The expansion of the fire facilities is in full swing. A new stand-alone building is being constructed next to the building housing the fire engines and will serve as the fire cache storing supplies like hoses, pumps, extra fire clothing, etc.

In front of the current main shop building, a new, two-story building with offices and locker facilities is being erected. These buildings will be connected via a hallway. Construction is expected to last until September and workers and equipment may cause parking areas to change, so please be cautious if you have to conduct business at the Operations and Maintenance Facility.



Lizard tail is a wetland plant that occurs on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. It is very attractive to bees and only grows to a height of two feet. It makes a good landscape plant for low energy shorelines and wet areas where you do not want a planting to obstruct your view, credit: Bob Glennon.

More Training for Interns
(continued from page 1)



Learning the proper and safe way to operate riding mowers with a representative from John Deere, credit: John Jennings.



Learning from Visitor Services Specialist Cindy Heffley about the shoreline during canoe tour training at Pea Island Refuge, credit: USFWS.

National Wildlife
Refuges Visitor Center
Nature Trail

Many people visiting the visitor center are amazed at the wonderful exhibit hall and auditorium filled with artwork. But how many have taken advantage of the short nature trails offered to give them a first-hand taste of the outdoors?

The trail just behind the visitor center is filled with informational panels to help you learn about what you might see. On this trail you will see many Loblolly Pines, but you will also find a wide variety of shrubs, vines, and bushes that change with the seasons. If you visit during a short window in the spring, you will even be treated to the Lady Slipper Orchid!

Depending on the season, you will see a variety of flowers, berries, and leaves. You may also spy a bird, turtle, squirrel, snake, salamander, or lizard. Other than the winter, you are sure to come across a spider or two. The most prominent spider on the trail is the funnel spider. As its name suggests, the web resembles a funnel which helps the spider catch more morsels of food than a typical “Spiderman-type” web. If you look carefully at the base of the web, you may get a glimpse of the spider waiting for a slight touch of its web, indicating lunch has arrived.

Many of the trees are colored with moss, fungi, and other growths which sometimes confuse the visitor trying to identify the type of tree. The trail is littered with pine cones in various stages of decomposition. While some are naturally decomposing, most are remnants of what is left after a squirrel has been munching on the seeds inside. Many of the leaves also have signs of being eaten by insects and turtles.



The delicate Lady Slipper Orchid, credit: USFWS.



Funnel spider web, credit: USFWS.



Deerberry (a type of blueberry), credit: Bob Glennon.

Remember to walk slowly on the trail looking up and down and side to side.

Sometimes the most enjoyable discovery is right in front of you, but it was missed because of concentrating on the path ahead. And know that even if you don't see any wildlife on your trek, the wildlife

surely saw you as you walked through their home. The trail winds through the forest and can be accessed from just behind the visitor center or just to the right of the visitor center near the handicap parking area. It is a natural trail, so be alert for roots or stumps that may be present.

Please do not wander off the trail since there are poisonous plants and briars in the area.

Wildlife/Wild Lands
Art Expo

Join us Friday, August 14, 2015, at the National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center for our Free Art Expo Reception from 5-8 pm.

Featured artists include Liz Corsca, who is known for real time sky painting of the Outer Banks, Eve Tureck, a nationally recognized photographer, Kitty Dough, the Colored Pencil Artist and Graphics leader at North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island, and Frank Duval, who catches the personality of coastal wildlife with drawings and ink washes.

Above right: Frank Duval, below right: Eve Turek



Pickerelweed (above) is a native wildflower that inhabits the freshwater marshes at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Its attractive flowers attract lots of bees and butterflies, credit: Glennon.

Swamp Rose (at right) is a native shrub that occurs on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Its fragrant flowers attract lots of pollinating insects and the rose hips that it produces are great food for songbirds. The rose hips have ascorbic acid (vitamin C) in them so they are bitter when they are first ripe. Birds eat them during the winter or as they migrate north in the spring, credit: Glennon.



Wings

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Follow us on Facebook:
Friends of Alligator River and
Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges
and USFWS North Carolina



Support Wings Over
Water by Purchasing
a Limited Edition 2015
T-shirt

This year we are experimenting with Wings Over Water fundraising by selling a limited edition t-shirt (see photo).

You must pre-order the t-shirt before September 30th to give us enough time to get them produced for distribution during Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival. The t-shirts will be available for pick up at Wings Over Water headquarters in National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center on Roanoke Island. Or, for an added \$5.00 you may request your shirt be shipped



to your home address. No shirts will be mailed out until after the festival. This is exclusively a pre-order item only.

Designed by David Hodge of the Antsety Hodge Advertising Group in Roanoke, Virginia, this t-shirt is a tasteful, classic simple design. Adult sizes only, S, M, L, and XL are \$15.99. 2X and 3X are \$18.99.

You may order your 2015 Wings Over Water t-shirt on-line at the website <http://wingsoverwater.org/shopping.html>. Or, you may call in an order at 252/216 9464.

Thank you for your support.

2015 Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival

Did you know that Wings Over Water takes place in and across five northeast North Carolina counties and six National Wildlife Refuges?

Dozens of people have already registered for the October portion of the 19th annual *Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival*. But there is still plenty of room for you to sign up for one or more of the over 100 trips and programs. There is also room to sign up for the newly added portion of *Wings Over Water* called, WOW Encore-A Winter Weekend being held December 4-6.

Everyone knows that *Wings Over Water* has great birding and top birding trip leaders. Birding has been the mainstay of the festival over the past 18 years. But *Wings Over Water* also includes great paddling, photography, art, and natural history trips and programs.

We're fortunate to have a great paddling partner with Heather MacLean and her company, Kitty Hawk Kayaks and Surf School. Heather and her crew donate their time and equipment to lead some of our most popular paddling trips such as, Kitty Hawk Bay Sunset Kayak Tour, Maritime Forest Morning Kayak Tour, and Maritime Forest Stand-up Paddleboard Eco-Tour.

Another valued partner is Joe O'Grady of Coastal Kayak Touring Company. Joe also donates his time and equipment to lead a fun paddle to an under-visited area on the Mashoes Marshes Kayak Tour.

This year we have a new couple, Samantha and Thomas Briley of Hatteras Island Ocean Center, volunteering their time and equipment. They are offering some great trips such as Hatteras Village Back Creek Kayak Tour, Moonlight Paddle in Hatteras Village, Birding Hatteras Village, and Composition in Your Nature Photography.

Refuge volunteer and plant expert extraordinaire, Bob Glennon, leads a new trip this year, Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Scuppernong Interpretive Boardwalk Plant Hike. Native plants that you might see daily and interesting plants about which you might have wondered will all be identified and discussed by Bob.

Hollie Hardison leads nature programs and stargazing shows in the planetarium at Neuseway Nature Park in New Bern, NC. We're fortunate to have her back leading wonderful programs for Wings Over Water such as Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge Sunset and Stargazing Canoe Tour, and Lost Colony Astronomy.

New WOW Encore - A Winter Weekend of Trips

Holding *Wings Over Water* toward the end of October has proven to be successful for all areas of *Wings Over Water*—paddling, photography & natural history. For birders it is a time when songbirds and warblers might still be on the refuges along with the beginning of a wide variety of geese, swan, ducks, and other migratory birds stopping and passing through.

But some birders hope for the view of the massive flocks of migratory birds that come through once the weather turns colder.

So this year we have added nine different WOW Encore birding and photography trips from Friday, December 4 through Sunday, December 6. All of the programs are on National Wildlife Refuges. They are:

Alligator River NWR Birding, Mattamuskeet NWR Birding, Mattamuskeet NWR Nature Photography Workshop, Mattamuskeet NWR Tram Tour, Oregon Inlet Old Coast Guard Station Birding, Pea Island NWR and Oregon Inlet Birding, Pea Island NWR North Pond Birding, Pea Island NWR South Pond and Beach Birding, and Pocosin Lakes NWR Birding.

Program	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Meeting Location
Refuge/Wildlife Movies	9:30-3:30	9:30-3:30	9:30-3:30	9:30-3:30	National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island
Turtle Talk	2:30-3:30 pm				Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
AR Canoe Tour \$(R)		9 am-noon	10 am-noon 5-7 pm	1-4 pm	Alligator River NWR Buffalo City Boat Launch
AR Van Tour \$(R)		7-9 am			Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
PI Bird Walk		8-9:30 am		8-9:30 am	Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
PI Canoe Tour \$(R)		10 am-noon	9 am-noon	10 am-noon	Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
Bird Adaptations		2:30-3:30 pm			Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
Bear Necessities		5:30-7 pm			Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Red Wolf Howling (\$)		7:30-9 pm			Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot
Who Goes There?	For details, visit www.fws.gov/refuge/alligator_river/visit/guided_programs.html		2:30-3:30 pm		National Wildlife Refuges Visitor Center Roanoke Island
Bees, Bats, and Butterflies			2:30-3:30 pm		Pea Island NWR Visitor Center
Open-air Tram Tour \$(R)				8:30-11 am	Alligator River NWR Creef Cut Trail Parking Lot